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SUBJECT: PLAN COLOMBIA IMPLEMENTATION ROUND-UP, JUNE, 2005

¶11. (U) The following is an update of Plan Colombia activities reported during June, 2005.

DOJ/JSRP

¶12. (U) The results of Justice Department and USAID efforts in Bogota to assist Colombia in the conversion to an oral accusatory justice system are continuing to bear fruit. The conversion has gone better than we had expected. Details of success in this regard have been reported via septels.

¶13. (U) The Judicial Sector Reform Program (JSRP) provided training to police officers, judges and prosecutors in the following general courses:

-- The "Investigator as a Witness" course was offered in Bogota, Bucaramanga, Cali, Ibagué, Medellín, Tunja, Villavicencio and Yopal to approximately 400 judicial police from the Cuerpo Técnico de Investigaciones (CTI), the Department of Administrative Security (DAS) and the Colombian National Police (CNP). This two-week course is designed to prepare the police for the implementation of the new Criminal Procedure Code and the new role of the police investigator, covering topics such as preserving evidence, report writing and testimony in court. This course combines classroom instruction with practical exercises including mock court proceedings.

-- The "Police Instructor" course was offered to 60 police officers in Medellín. The two-week course is designed to prepare them as instructors in training patrol officers in the accusatory system and the new Criminal Procedure Code.

-- The "Patrol Officer" course was offered to 60 patrol officers in Bucaramanga. The one-week course is designed to prepare them as instructors for fellow patrol officers in the new accusatory system and the new Criminal Procedure Code.

-- The "Leadership for Judicial Police" course was offered to 25 police unit chiefs, commanders, and office heads from the CNP, DAS and CTI in Cartagena. The course focused on developing effective communication techniques, teamwork and group dynamics, leadership styles, and the accusatory system.

-- The "Post Blast and Crime Scene Explosives" course was offered to 30 investigators, bomb technicians and forensic experts from the CNP, DAS, CTI and the Institute for Legal Medicine and Forensic Science (ILMFS). The course focused on explosives theory, investigative techniques, evidence handling, chain of custody, live fire explosive demonstrations, and post-blast crime scene reconstruction. The course combined classroom instruction with practical crime scene scenarios. DOJ and ATF combined to organize and provide instruction, including 5 ATF explosives instructors from the U.S.

¶14. (U) The JSRP also offered the following courses in forensic training:

-- The "Advanced Digital Photography" course was offered in Bogota to 25 crime scene experts from ILMFS, CNP, DAS and CTI. The course taught techniques in photographing crime scenes and preparing for testimony in court.

-- The "Expert Witness" course was offered in Bogota to 50 forensic crime lab experts from ILMFS, CNP, DAS and CTI. The course taught techniques in delivering effective testimony as experts in an accusatory system, including the testimony involving complex scientific evidence. Forensic experts from the U.S. assisted Colombian and Embassy DOJ staff in organizing and presenting the course.

-- The "Intellectual Property Theft" course was offered in Cali to 30 police investigators and forensic experts from the CNP and CTI in techniques and methods in the investigation of intellectual property crimes.

¶15. (U) The JSRP also offered the following courses for prosecutors:

-- The "Financial Analysis and Data Base Management" course was offered in Bogota to 50 prosecutors and investigators from the national and local Anti-Corruption units and the National Money Laundering and Asset Forfeiture Unit. The course focused on how to analyze and understand financial

information and databases to assist in the investigation and prosecution of public corruption, money laundering and asset forfeiture cases. The course combined classroom instruction with practical exercises, including testimony and presentation of evidence in court.

-- The "Criminal Trial Advocacy" course was offered in Medellin and Bogota to 120 prosecutors and 60 police investigators on the new Criminal Procedure Code and the accusatory system. The course focused on the role of the prosecutor, police/prosecutor cooperation, evidence, presenting a prosecution, decisions about charging for crimes, plea bargaining, preparation for trial, and trial techniques. This course combined classroom instruction with practical exercises including mock court proceedings and mock trials. Five Assistant United States Attorneys assisted Colombian instructors and Embassy DOJ attorneys in providing instruction.

¶16. (U) The JSRP also offered the "Criminal Trials" course to 50 judges from Bogota, Santa Rosa and Tunja. The course focused on the new Criminal Procedure Code and the accusatory system. Topics included the role of the judge, the role of the litigating parties, preliminary hearings, evidence, making decisions in court, and presiding over trials. This course combined classroom instruction with practical exercises including mock court proceedings and mock trials.

MILGROUP

¶17. (U) The helicopters for the Infrastructure Security Strategy (ISS) are on the ground in Saravena and the first two-week Air Assault Training began on June 2. The U.S. Special Forces working with the 18th Brigade (BDE) Headquarters will begin Air Assault Staff Planning with the goal of having the 18th BDE produce an Air Assault order for the unit receiving training in Saravena in order to support the final field training. The last four Huey IIs designated for the ISS mission arrived in Colombia on June 22.

¶18. (U) Recently our intelligence-gathering effort has been reduced dramatically. Relevant details will be reported in classified channels septel.

NAS

¶19. (U) The CNP, the Fiscalia, and the National Directorate of Dangerous Drugs (DNE) took a decisive step forward on June 9 when they applied asset seizure and forfeiture laws for the first time to property being used to grow illicit crops (a violation of Colombia's counter-narcotics Law 30). Under the protection of 150 mobile Carabinero policemen, specialized Fiscalia and DNE units deployed to Pensilvania, Caldas to notify the landowners that their property was now state property, and to serve notice that property owners can appeal the GOC's decision through a court process in Bogota.

¶110. (U) The asset seizure and forfeiture program still has many obstacles to work though. Of the 22 eligible properties in two neighboring Caldas municipalities, the GOC was able to identify and process the paperwork for just three properties in two days. Helicopter support and extensive security was required to protect civilian representatives of the Fiscalia and DNE. Last October, when the GME tried to enter the area to manually eradicate coca and gather evidence, a two-hour firefight began with a FARC front active in the area. Returning to the plot eight months later was difficult in the rugged terrain. It is not clear whether the DNE could exert control over this land in the future. The paperwork requirements for the process are onerous. Landowners are not actually evicted, nor does the state take immediate control, as the term "occupy" might imply. Fiscalia representatives explained that there is no defined time limit for appeal, and resolving the first cases could take up to two years, even though they are processed in a specially designated asset forfeiture court. Perhaps most importantly, the GOC does not yet have a clear vision for how and where property seizures will be applied, nor does it have a public affairs campaign to garner maximum impact from the application of the rule of law.

¶111. (U) Nevertheless, expanding the GOC's law enforcement presence so that cases can be processed against illicit crop growers who have never been sanctioned is a crucial first step. This program may be the greatest benefit of manual eradication. If this law is applied broadly throughout coca and opium poppy growing areas, it will be a powerful deterrent to illicit cultivation and should reduce high replant rates.

RSO

¶12. (SBU) The Presidential Security Program recently completed three advanced personal protective security courses this past month. Twelve veteran agents of President Uribe's protective detail attended an advanced course on surveillance detection. Twenty agents from the details of the president, vice-president, and Minister of Defense attended two advanced, anti-terrorist driving courses.

¶13. (SBU) Anti-Kidnapping Initiative (AKI): Crisis Response Training (CRT) Course Number 9 officially began on June 6 and is scheduled to end on July 15. The course is being presented to 24 members of the anti-kidnapping GAULA Army forces (Grupo de Accion Unificada para la Libertad Personal, or GAULA) in Santander. In conjunction with DOJ representatives in the embassy, Colombian judicial personnel gave the first of three presentations on Colombian justice sector reforms to CRT Course number 9 on June 10. This will be a permanent block of instruction for all GAULAs being trained at Sibate. On June 1 RSO proposed to Vice Minister of Defense Andres Penate that CRT 10 begin on July 25 and be offered to GAULA Navy forces from Sucre. As of June 20, the Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program will have five American instructors working with the 10 previously trained Colombian assistant instructors. It is expected that these instructors will form the core of the future Colombian AKI training staff when the ATA Program transitions to the GOC.

¶14. (SBU) The much awaited equipment donation for GAULA classes four through seven arrived in one large shipment on June 14. On June 15 the shipment was transferred to the Fondo Rotatorio under armed security escort provided by the GOC to begin the process of legal transfer from the USG to the GOC ("nationalization"). The shipment has an approximate value of US \$900,000. The turnover of the donated equipment will depend on how long the nationalization process takes. On June 16, DS/ATA informed RSO that the Export Control License for the donation of equipment to GAULA eight had been signed. This equipment should be ready for donation in late June or early July, after the nationalization process has been completed.

¶15. (SBU) Sistema Integrado de Informacion Extorsion y Secuestro (SIIES): The much-awaited initiation of the Cundinamarca Pilot Project began on June 15. This is the first real test of the SIIES Program. It is anticipated that the pilot will continue through the end of July as the bugs are ironed out. If all goes well, there will be a gradual phase-in of the 31 remaining GAULAs. This phase-in should be completed by September 30, 2005. To date, the approximate value of equipment donated to the GOC in support of SIIES is US \$84,300. This equipment is composed of hardware, software, computers and servers.

USAID

¶16. (U) On June 4, President Uribe inaugurated USAID's 39th Justice House (Casa de Justicia) in Buenaventura (Valle). Justice Houses are multi-agency, one-stop centers that provide formal and informal dispute resolution services. The centers operate in marginal areas of large cities and rural municipalities serving those who would otherwise not have access to formal justice services. The Justice Houses Program is a nationwide effort to promote a more responsive, participatory and accountable democracy in Colombia. To date, over 3.1 million cases have been handled through the 38 Justice Houses. By the end of FY2005, a total of 42 Justice Houses are anticipated to be in place.

¶17. (U) On June 11, First Lady Uribe inaugurated USAID's ninth Co-existence Center in Sonson (Antioquia). Co-existence Centers are public spaces that provide access to formal justice and an opportunity for the community to promote citizen values and dispute resolution. The center was co-financed by USAID (US \$350,000), the Ministry of the Interior and Justice, and the Mayor of Sonson (US \$150,000). It will provide services to roughly 40,000 citizens. Through the International Organization for Migration, USAID's Peace Initiatives Program has established eight Co-existence Centers in the most conflictive and vulnerable municipalities in the country. The GOC would like to establish 14 centers.

¶18. (U) On June 14 USAID launched the "Promocion de Jovenes Empresarios en Situacion de Vulnerabilidad en la Zona de Influencia de Metrocable" Project in Medellin (Antioquia). The project will provide business skills training to roughly 100 adolescents from the "Metrocable" area (Northeast of Medellin). Adolescents in this area are extremely vulnerable to recruitment by illegal armed groups and other forms of urban delinquency. The initiative is co-financed by USAID, the Pan American Foundation for Development, the Mayor of Medellin, the Caja de Compensacion Familiar de Antioquia, and Philip Morris Colombia S.A. PADF's contribution to the

project was raised during a gala-dinner for President Uribe held in Washington, D.C. in March, 2004.

¶19. (U) Some 897 beneficiaries in ten different cities graduated from USAID's Program for Economic Assistance to IDPs, implemented by USAID partner CHF International. The program generates new employment and promotes sustainable economic growth through activities such as technical training, job placement, and support to micro-enterprises. The majority of the beneficiaries who graduated this month received financial and technical support for their small and microbusinesses. These beneficiaries are now averaging the income of two minimum salaries per month -- double their earnings at the start of the program. To date, the program has benefited roughly 9,270 families nationwide. In addition, the initiative has received nearly US \$6 million in matching contributions from more than 35 organizations nationwide.

WOOD